

**Biggleswade Rural District**

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**ANNUAL REPORT**

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ON THE

**Health and Sanitary Circumstances  
of the District**

*For the Year ended December 31st, 1921*

BY

**J. HUTCHINSON WOOD,**

M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

*Medical Officer of Health.*



# To the Chairman and Members

## OF THE

# Biggleswade Rural District Council.

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you the Report on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of your District for the year 1921.

By direction of the Ministry of Health an Annual Report of a full and detailed character, called a Survey Report, will normally be required at intervals of not more than five years. In other years an Ordinary Report of a more simple character is required. The Annual Reports for 1919 and 1920 are to be treated as constituting the first of the series of Survey Reports, this therefore, is an Ordinary Report, and will accordingly be found to contain less detail than has been the custom in previous years.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

April 1922.

J. HUTCHINSON WOOD.



## 1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres) .....	53,627
Population (1921) for Birth rate .....	23,100
Population (1921) for Death rate .....	22,261
Number of inhabited houses (1921) .....	5,787 approx.
Number of families or separate occupiers (1921) .....	5,787 „
Rateable value .....	£138,495
Assessable value .....	£113,144

## 2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

### Population.

The estimated mid-yearly figures are supplied by the Registrar General, who has reverted again to a separate one for calculations for (a) Birth-rate and (b) Death-rate. The latter is for civilians only, and for the former includes the total population of the district, civilian and fighting services, e.g. presumably Henlow Aerodrome.

### Births.

	Total	M.	F.	
Legitimate .....	392	208	184	} Birth Rate (R.G.) 17.66
Illegitimate .....	16	8	8	

The birth-rate for the whole of England and Wales for the year 1921, was 22.4.

### Deaths.

	Total	M.	F.	
Civilians only (all causes) ..	264	139	125	Death Rate (R.G.) 11.85

The death-rate from all causes for the whole of England and Wales for 1921 was 12.1

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth .. .. . } From Sepsis .. 0

18 deaths (legitimate children 14, illegitimate 4) occurred in infants under one year of age, and the death-rate per 1000 births was as follows :

Legitimate .. ..	35.7	} Total .. 44.1
Illegitimate .. ..	250.0	

This total rate is again the lowest on record for the district. The corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales for 1921 was 83.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) .. .. . 0

„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages) .. .. . 0

„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) .. .. . 2

There has been no unusual or excessive mortality during the year.

The following table gives the causes of death :

	Males.	Females.
Enteric Fever .....	1	—
Diphtheria .....	—	1
Influenza .....	1	—
Tuberculosis of respiratory system ..	7	10
Other Tuberculous Diseases .....	3	4
Cancer (malignant disease) .....	20	13
Rheumatic Fever .....	—	1
Diabetes .....	1	2
Cerebral Hemorrhage, &c. ....	15	7
Heart Disease .....	12	12
Arterio-Sclerosis .....	2	4

	Males.	Females
Bronchitis .....	7	13
Pneumonia (all forms) .....	6	7
Other respiratory diseases .....	1	1
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum ..	1	1
Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years) ....	2	—
Appendicitis and Typhlitis .....	2	1
Cirrhosis of Liver.....	1	1
Acute and Chronic Nephritis ....	6	2
Congenital Debility and Malformation, Premature Birth .....	8	—
Suicide .....	5	—
Other deaths from violence .....	7	3
Other defined diseases .....	30	41
Causes ill-defined or unknown ....	1	1
	<u>139</u>	<u>125</u>

### 3—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria .....	11	9	1
Scarlet Fever .....	40	28	0
Pneumonia .....	8	0	13
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid) .....	5	0	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum....	3	0	0
Erysipelas .....	8	0	0
Malaria.....	3	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis .....	1	0	0
Tuberculosis :—			
(a) Pulmonary { M	23	—	7
{ F	17	—	10
{ Total	40	—	17
(b) Non-Pulmonary { M	5	—	3
{ F	2	—	4
{ Total	7	—	7

The above number of Tuberculosis Notifications includes 8 from an Institution in the district.

#### Analysis of the total cases notified under age-groups.

Disease.	Under 1 yr.	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 65	65 and over
Diphtheria .....	—	—	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever .....	1	—	7	—	2	16	7	3	4	—	—	—
Pneumonia .....	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	3	1	—
Enteric Fever .....	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	—	—	1	—
Erysipelas .....	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	3	1
Tuberculosis :—												
(a) Pulmonary { M	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	1	8	5	6	—
{ F	—	—	—	—	1	4	—	2	3	1	6	—
(b) Non-Pulmonary { M	—	—	—	—	1	3	—	—	1	—	—	—
{ F	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—

### Analysis of deaths under age-groups.

Disease.	Un- der 1 yr.	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 25	25 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 65	65 and over
Diphtheria .....	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enteric Fever .....	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Pneumonia .....	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	3	6	—
Tuberculosis													
(a) Pulmonary { M	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	3	1	2	—	—
{ F	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	—
(b) Non-pul-     { M	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
monary { F	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	3	—	—

The notification of tuberculosis in the district is only fairly efficient. The importance of it has been brought to the notice of general practitioners by circular letter and in other ways.

It will also be noticed that the notification of pneumonia is unsatisfactory, if the number of deaths from the disease is compared with the number of notifications received.

## 4.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

There is nothing specially noteworthy to be recorded under this heading

## 5.—SUMMARY (FOR REFERENCE) OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITALS, AND OTHER INSTI- TUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

### Professional Nursing in the Home.

None provided by this Authority, but the County Council employs a Health Visitor for certain work.

Some of the parishes employ a parish or district nurse, whose services are of the greatest value.

### Midwives.

Registration and supervision exercised by the County Council.

### Clinics and Treatment Centres.

None in the district. The nearest available are:  
for { Maternity and Child Welfare. } in Biggleswade.  
      { Tuberculosis. }  
for Venereal Disease in Bedford.

## Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or by the County Council.

Hospital.	Situation.	Authority.	Accommodation
(1) Tuberculosis	Mogerhanger Park	County Council	—
(2) Maternity	none		
(3) Children	none		
* (4) Fever	Biggleswade	Jointly with Biggleswade U.D.	22 Beds.
(5) Smallpox	Biggleswade	Jointly with Biggleswade U.D.	12 Beds.
(6) Mental	Stotfold	County Council	—
(7) Infirmary	Biggleswade	Guardians	—

\*The alterations and repairs of this Hospital are long overdue and should receive immediate attention. See my Annual Report for 1920.

## Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children.

None except that provided by the Guardians at the Infirmary, Biggleswade.

## Ambulance facilities.

(a) For Infectious cases	}	Motor Ambulance
(b) For Non-infectious and accident cases		stationed at the Isolation Hospital.

# 6.—LABORATORY WORK.

## Bacteriological Examinations.

Arrangements are made whereby medical men practising in the district can obtain free Bacteriological Examinations in cases of Diphtheria, Typhoid Fever, Tuberculosis and Meningitis. These examinations are carried out by the Lister Institute, as the Council does not possess the necessary fitted laboratory.

During the year 18 such examinations were made.

## Provision of Antitoxin.

Medical men practising in the district can obtain a free supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin. It is kept at the Isolation Hospital, Potton Road, Biggleswade, and doctors can obtain it according to their requirements. The earlier this remedy is used in a case of Diphtheria, the greater the chance of recovery. Wherever there is the least suspicion of Diphtheria it is wise to inject Antitoxin, and to submit a swab for examination. If the latter should prove to be negative, no harm is done, and should it on the other hand be positive, much valuable time has been saved.

Tetanus Antitoxin is supplied by the County Council, Shire Hall, Bedford, similarly.

## PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS ADOPTED.

- I. Infectious Diseases (Prevention), Act, 1890, adopted January, 1891.
- II. Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act 1890, Part III, adopted September, 1896.

## Bye-laws or Regulations are in force in respect of:—

Slaughter-houses, Common Lodging-houses, Removal of House Refuse, Cleansing of Privies, etc., Prevention of Nuisances, Keeping of Animals, New Streets and Buildings (Structure and Drainage), Cleansing of Footways, Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milk-shops.



## 7.—SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

### Water Supply.

4891 houses are supplied with water through 2185 services of the Biggleswade Rural District Council. During the year the services have increased by 623, and the number of houses supplied by 225. The large increase in the number of services includes those provided for the new Council Cottages, which are now being erected in the district.

The extension of the water mains to supply the villages of Dunton, Eyeworth and Wrestlingworth was commenced in June 1921, and completed by December 1921.

The question of extending the mains to supply the village of Meppershall was considered, but deferred owing to excessive cost.

The average supply per head per day (taking 4.3 persons per property and including all water used for trade and public purposes) is about 20.23 gallons, and for domestic purposes only 14.68 gallons.

The following table shows the parishes supplied by the Biggleswade Water Board:

	No. of Houses Census, 1911	No. of Houses Supplied upto Dec. 31, 1921	Increase during 1921.
Arlesey .. .. .	550	534	45
Astwick .. .. .	13	13	—
Blunham .. .. .	162	109	3
Campton .. .. .	108	126	29
Chicksands .. .. .	10	3	—
Clifton .. .. .	384	326	26
Cockayne Hatley .. .. .	28	—	—
Dunton .. .. .	112	105	105
Edworth .. .. .	20	22	2
Everton .. .. .	48	—	—
Eyeworth .. .. .	30	1	1
Henlow .. .. .	235	229	17
Langford .. .. .	316	352	33
Meppershall .. .. .	165	6	—
Mogerhanger .. .. .	108	105	14
Northill .. .. .	318	352	47
Potton .. .. .	527	472	23
Sandy .. .. .	809	816	63
Shefford .. .. .	210	223	7
Shefford Hardwicke .. .. .	21	38	30
Southill .. .. .	275	269	26
Stondon .. .. .	16	—	—
Stotfold .. .. .	488	452	23
Sutton .. .. .	59	51	—
Tempsford .. .. .	126	138	32
Warden .. .. .	106	51	2
Wrestlingworth .. .. .	134	107	107

A further summary of the work of the Sanitary Department during the year will be found in the report of the Sanitary Inspector at the end of the report.



## 8.—PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

One Medical Officer of Health (part time only).

One Sanitary Inspector for whole district, who is also Meat and Food Inspector.

One Assistant available for outdoor and clerk's work, excepting for two afternoons a week when he assists in collecting rents of the Council Cottages.

The above arrangement is a change from previous years when the district was divided into two, each with an Inspector in charge. The late Inspector was also Surveyor, but now in addition to the latter duty he is responsible for looking after and collecting rents of the new Council Cottages.

## 9.—HOUSING.

Considerable progress has been made during the year in the erection and occupation of houses under the Assisted Housing Scheme as the table below shows.

**Assisted Housing Scheme (from commencement of Scheme).**

Houses erected, in course of erection, and occupied on 31st December, 1921, in the different parishes.

Parish.	Number of Houses completed and in course or erection.		Number of Houses occupied.
Arlesey .....	40	.....	40
Blunham .....	10	.....	—
Campton .....	26	.....	18
Clifton .....	32	.....	18
Dunton .....	8	.....	—
Everton .....	6	.....	—
Henlow .....	26	.....	12
Langford .....	42	.....	26
Meppershall .....	8	.....	—
Mogerhanger .....	14	.....	12
Northill .....	46	.....	40
Potton .....	40	.....	20
Sandy .....	62	.....	62
Shefford Hardwicke .....	30	.....	30
Southill .....	56	.....	26
Stotfold .....	61	.....	35
Sutton .....	12	.....	—
Tempsford .....	30	.....	6
Wrestlingworth .....	16	.....	—
Total ..	565		345

In addition to the above, 8 new dwelling-houses have been erected by private individuals.

Better progress has also been made in repairs and improvements to existing properties, but with regard to houses unfit to repair it has not been possible so far to do much. This latter question has also been seriously affected by the excessive rents which are being asked for the new cottages, and also by the large amount of unemployment during the year. There are a large number of unfit houses in the district, and it is a matter of the greatest regret to me, that, in spite of the energetic manner in which the Housing Question has been tackled by you, the economic position of to-day has prevented a greater measure of progress.

The following table gives a further summary of Housing work during the year :—

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a)	Total.	338
(b)	As part of a municipal housing scheme.	330
1.	<i>Unfit dwelling houses.</i>	
	Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	1495
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 .. .. .	187
	(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation .. .. .	111
	(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation .. .. .	230
2.	<i>Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.</i>	
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers .. .. .	—
3.	<i>Action under Statutory Powers.</i>	
	A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1919 .. .. .	Nil.
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs .. .. .	
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit .. .. .	
	(a) by owners .. .. .	
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners .. .. .	
	(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close. .. .. .	
	B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.	
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .. .. .	247
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied :—	
	(a) by owners .. .. .	202
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners .. .. .	—
	C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909.	
	(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders. .. .. .	68
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made .. .. .	60
	(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit .. .. .	3
	(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made .. .. .	0
	(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. .. .	0

In addition to the above I have to present the following statistics :—

Houses demolished by owners without C.O. or D.O. ....	5
Houses demolished by owner after C.O. by Council .....	4
Houses converted into barns or other buildings .....	2
Houses closed by owner .....	1

# Biggleswade Rural District Council.

## Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector for the Year, 1921.

### TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BIGGLESWADE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—

I beg to present herewith a Summary of the Sanitary work carried out during the year 1921.

In June last your Council appointed me as Sanitary Inspector for the whole of the Rural District, owing to a re-arrangement of the duties of Mr. J. Owen Jones, who then discontinued to act as Sanitary Inspector to the Northern Area in order to devote the main portion of his time to the management of the New Council Houses.

The figures given below therefore include inspections in the Northern District from June last.

Towards the close of the year your Council appointed Mr. H. Paine as my Assistant, and there is no doubt but that his services will be of great assistance..

#### Housing.

Considerable time has been taken up in connection with Housing work, many inspections having been made in company with the Medical Officer of Health.

Details of the action taken will be found in the report of the Medical Officer.

#### New Buildings.

Plans deposited and approved .....	19
New dwelling-houses erected .....	8
Existing building converted into dwelling-house .....	1
Additions to existing dwelling-houses .....	4
New workshops .....	2
Other buildings erected .....	15

#### Meat and Food Inspection.

There are 26 slaughter-houses in the district, of which 14 are registered and 12 are licensed annually.

These premises are inspected periodically together with the butchers' shops and other places where food is sold or prepared for sale.

The following shows the amount of unsound meat destroyed during the year :—

Beef .....	2254 lbs.	Pork .....	264 lbs.
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Various internal organs found to be unsound.

## DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS

There are now 100 persons registered as dairymen or cowkeepers. Nineteen persons were registered during the year, and 5 discontinued business.

The parishes in which the premises are situated are as follows:

Arlesey .....	12	Mogerhanger .....	3
Blunham .....	5	Northill .....	7
Clifton .....	9	Potton .....	3
Campton .....	2	Sandy .....	7
Cockayne Hatley .....	2	Shefford .....	2
Dunton .....	2	Stotfold .....	8
Everton ..	2	Southill .....	8
Henlow .....	4	Sutton .....	2
Langford .....	9	Tempsford .....	5
Meppershall .....	4	Warden .....	2
Wrestlingworth .....		2	

96 inspections have been made in connection with these premises, in 23 instances cleansing was necessary, which was carried out when the occupier's attention was called to same, in 14 other cowsheds improvements were carried out. Three new cowsheds were erected in place of old sheds.

## REGISTERED WORKSHOPS

Workshops on the Register at the end of the year.

Dressmakers and Milliners .....	12
Bootmakers and Repairers .....	27
Bakers .....	30
Wheelwrights .....	10
Motor and Cycle Engineers .....	19
Stonemasons .....	2
Carpenters and Plumbers .....	22
Blacksmiths .....	25
Tailors .....	9
Brickmakers .....	3
Saddlers .....	4
Printers .....	3
Tinsmiths .....	1
Tannery .....	1
Cabinet-makers .....	1
Pickling Factory .....	1

### Scavenging.

The removal of household refuse and the emptying of earth closets, privies, dumbwells, etc., is carried out by contractors appointed by the respective Parochial Committees at Arlesey, Henlow, Langford, Shefford and Potton.

At Sandy the work is carried out by direct labour.

The following is a Summary of the scavenging work carried out during the year.



Parish	Total No. of visits made.	Ashpits emptied	Ashboxes emptied.	Privies emptied	Cesspools emptied.	Pail Closets emptied.	No. of Loads removed.	Average Cost	
								Per visit	Per Load removed
Arlesey .....	43285	2	10770	13	31	26210	659	1½d.	9/2
Henlow .....	34234	1	13568	5	16	20632	375	1½d.	9/7
Langford .....	29573	—	9461	44	18	16633	408	2d.	11/5½
Shefford .....	19854	1	7471	1	17	12264	356	1½d.	8/5¼
Sandy (By direct Labour)	72636	17	29296	200	213	42453	2489	3½d.	8/4½
Potton (10 mths by direct Labour)	26305	20	19350	101	305	6526	870	3d.	7/6
Potton (2 months by Contract.)	5278	2	4353	21	10	892	220	1¼d.	3/6¼

### Petroleum Acts 1871 to 1881.

These Acts provide for the safe keeping of petroleum which, when tested in a prescribed manner, gives off an inflammable vapour at a temperature below 73 deg. Fahrenheit.

Wherever petroleum spirit is kept it is necessary to obtain a licence from the Local Authority, with the following exceptions:

(1) When kept in separate vessels and containing not more than one pint and the total quantity kept does not exceed three gallons.

(2) When it is kept for the purpose of light locomotives in conformity with the Regulations made by the Secretary of State and the total quantity kept in one store does not exceed sixty gallons.

CARBIDE OF CALCIUM, to which the Petroleum Acts also apply, may be only kept without a licence when the total quantity kept does not exceed 28 lbs., and certain condition made by the Secretary of State observed.

I would take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the support given to me by your Council, and also to the Medical Officer of Health for his valuable guidance and help.—I am,

Your obedient Servant,

C. M. ROBINSON, M.S.I.A.,

Sanitary Inspector.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

Routine and Special Inspections .....	1495
Re-visits after order or notice .....	355
Visits to Works in progress .....	134
Housing Inspections .....	187
Inspection of Workshops, including Bakehouses .....	251
"    "    Slaughterhouses .....	148
"    "    Foodshops .....	152
"    "    Cowsheds .....	161
"    "    Petroleum Stores .....	80
Visits re Infectious Diseases .....	120
Rooms disinfected after Infectious Diseases .....	117
Samples of water taken .....	3
Visits re cases of Tuberculosis .....	89

### Notices Served.

Intimation Notices served 122, dealing with 247 houses.  
Statutory Notices served 32, dealing with 42 houses.

## SUMMARY OF REPAIRS CARRIED OUT AFTER INTIMATION TO OWNER OR OCCUPIER.

### Dwelling Houses.

Roofs repaired .....	28
Floors repaired .....	54
Walls and ceilings repaired .....	28
Roof guttering repaired or renewed .....	17
Windows repaired or made to open .....	33
Rooms cleansed or redecorated .....	56
Dampness abated .....	10
Water supply laid on .....	15
Overcrowding abated .....	7
Miscellaneous repairs carried out .....	64

### Drains.

Unstopped and cleansed .....	42
Drains trapped or repaired .....	35
New drains laid .....	20

### Closet Accommodation.

Insanitary privies abolished and pails substituted .....	39
New sanitary pails provided in place of defective ones ...	21
Additional Pail Closets provided .....	11
Existing closet apartments repaired .....	7
Insanitary ashpits abolished .....	12
New galvanised iron ashbins provided .....	21
Accumulations of refuse removed .....	27
Nuisances from the keeping of animals abated .....	9

### Cowsheds and Dairies.

Cowsheds cleansed or limewashed after notice .....	23
Existing cowsheds or dairies improved .....	14
Bakehouses cleansed and limewashed .....	8
Petroleum stores repaired .....	8